

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR MOHAMMED KHAN

Date: 22nd March 2018

National Festival of Making 2018

The National Festival of Making returns for a second year on May 12-13 after last year welcoming 30,000 people to Blackburn.

Residents and visitors alike can look forward to another year of free hands-on workshops, street performance and art installations within Blackburn town centre, Cathedral Quarter and venues in the town centre.

The range of events and projects announced to take place this year, with many more to be announced, are:

- **Art in Manufacturing:** Forging connections between some of the country's most talented artists and the manufacturers of Pennine Lancashire.
- **Making Activities:** A broad range of activities on offer for all ages with many completely FREE.
- **Food & Drink Makers:** Fusion Asia-meets-Lancashire pies and the unmissable, ale-dispensing double-decker bus gave visitors flavours to savour last year and 2018 will be no different, welcoming both local and international food producers and their wares.
- **Makers Markets:** Textiles, ceramics, paintings and prints from some of the most imaginative and dedicated makers from around the UK gathered in Blackburn in 2017, each warmly invited for the quality of their products. More of the same is planned this time around.

However, much of the success of last year's event and one of the reasons why the festival is returning was the outstanding response from our residents, not only those who attended and enjoyed the activities, but also the hundreds of people who gave their time and volunteered over the festival weekend.

If we are to build on last year's success, we need to encourage more people to volunteer and I would recommend that you all share the details of this wonderful event and the volunteering opportunities available to all.

Further information can be found via <https://festivalofmaking.co.uk/volunteer/>

We are working with many partners to ensure that this is a huge success and I invite all members to attend the festival and promote our borough as the great place that we know it to be.

Our 20th Anniversary – 1st April 2018

As you know twenty years ago the Council became a Unitary Authority. We intend to use various opportunities throughout the next municipal year to recap on the two decades, highlight key milestones and celebrate achievements. This is still time for members of the Council to submit any relevant material and memories which could be used at one or more of the events and activities.

Social integration

The Government launched its Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper on March 14 initiating a 12 week consultation period. Council will recall that we endorsed our social integration strategy at our last meeting following a full community consultation.

We have been ambitious in our approach to making the borough a more prosperous and cohesive place. As a result we have been invited to be one of the five Integration Areas, working in partnership with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. The vision is to 'build strong integrated communities where people, whatever their background – live, work and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities'.

This partnership will help us build on our strong track record and accelerate our efforts, providing resources and opportunities to pilot new approaches and learn from others.

We look forward to developing this programme for the benefit of our communities.

We have many powerful examples of integration in action. We have very strong partnerships at all levels, with enthusiastic people keen to work with us on all aspects of integration for the good of the borough.

Last month I was honoured to present the One Voice Council Leader Award to Stuart Parker. This award acknowledges people that have promoted community cohesion through leadership. Stuart is a scout leader and through his work he has brought people together from many different backgrounds.

We also recently hosted the Your Call Good Neighbour Awards. These awards were established to recognise and celebrate people who make their streets, communities and neighbourhoods better places. We had a record number of 100 nominations this year and support from many partners.

Community funding portal

We have been working with Community CVS and other partners to identify and provide external funding opportunities for local people, community groups and organisations. Thousands of potential grant funding opportunities can now be quickly accessed through the new, free to use, BwD Open4Community online search tool.

To register and find out more, please visit:

<http://www.blackburn.gov.uk/Pages/funding-opportunities.aspx>.

Health and social care update

Work continues on developing the Pennine Plan following feedback from residents on a draft plan published in December.

The programme team held a number of engagement events across the area including several in Blackburn with Darwen. I want to thank all members who contributed and helped highlight this to their constituents, as it is really important that residents had a chance to have their say on the plan.

Work also continues on developing a governance framework for the shadow Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) with a view of launching the shadow partnership on 1st April.

The ICP will take shared responsibility for delivering our agreed performance goals and improving on our shared health and care goals, and provide the overarching framework within which partnership arrangements at the district and neighbourhood levels will operate and deliver for our residents. The ICP will be discussed at the next Partnership Leaders Forum, which the Chief Executive and I sit on and I will update members accordingly after that meeting.

If you have any queries about the programme please contact the programme director Dionne.standbridge@nhs.net

You can also send your questions and queries to me and I will make sure they are received by the programme. More details can be found at: www.togetherahealthierfuture.org.uk